

Violin Outbreak # 16

IN THIS ISSUE, AN INTERVIEW WITH...



IMAGINARY ICONS

~~and~~ REVIEWS OF THE BRATS, DEATH, CARBONAS,
FLY ASHTRAY, DAVE THOMAS (OF PERE UBU), TWO TEARS,
KEVIN SECONDS & KEPi, GOON SQUAD, X, UNDERTONES,

+ PLUS COMIX, EDITORIALS, & MORE!!

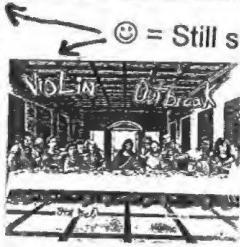
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NEW YORK, NY
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Violin Outbreak #16

JUNE, 2009



Issue #8



Issue #11

 = Still some available.

 = Sold Out, sorry.

Back Issues

VIOLENT OUTBREAK



- #1. Heart Attack Reesa & The Rooters - 1981
 - #2. Ramones Black Flag Misfits Bad Brains & more - 1982
 - #3. Revillos Minor Threat & more - 1982
 - #4. Misfits Circle Jerks The Fall "Flex Your Head" & more - 1982
 - #5. Headlickers interview, Dickies interview, Flipper & more - 1982

VIOLIN OUTBREAK

- #6. Nihilistics, Misguided, & Artificial Peace interviews, & more - 1982
 - 1/8th of #7. Suicidal Tendencies, Mustid, & more - 1984
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 - #8. The Cramps, Scared of Stares, False Liberty, & more - 1987
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 - #10. Ultra 5, El Vez, Manson Family, Chimpanzees, & more - 1993
 - #11. The Fall's Mark E. Smith interview, Buzzcocks, & more - 1993
 - #12. Goo Girls, LiliPUT, El Vez, Marianne Faithfull, & more - 1994
 - 1/8th of #13. Nutley Brass, Sosumi, Hide Records, & more - 1995
 - #13. Revillos, Wig Hat, Sea Monkeys, Garage Shock '95, & more - 1996
 - #14. Lou Christie interview, Bozo Shmo, Groovie Ghoulies & more - 1997
 - #15. Rot Gut interview, & more - 1998
 - #16. Imaginary Icons interview, & more - 2000



**It's been 10
FUCKIN' years
in between issues
#15 and #16 of
Violin Outbreak!
I'm sorry I let my
other zines &
projects keep me
away from work
on this, my very 1st
zine, for so long.**

**But who knows when the
Next issue will be?????????**



"I think the left is going bananas, based on what I've seen in the blogosphere on the left, because it looks increasingly like Bush was right on a whole range of counterterrorism initiatives that he put in place. From Guantanamo Bay to military tribunals, warrantless wiretapping, rendition, it really looks like Bush was right. And I think that the left increasingly is going to be very agitated by the course that this president is taking." — MONICA CROWLEY, 5/17/09

When I heard these delusional words spoken by this nutjob on tv... and as I watched in horror as this insane statement was allowed to stand unchallenged as if it was the truth, I decided then and there I'd have to respond somehow, even if it were just in the pages of my stupid zine that next-to-nobody reads! Let's get something straight Monica you crackpot! There is nothing, nothing, nothing that Bush did when he was in office that was right! It hasn't been proven right, and no one except loonies like you are even entertaining the notion that he was right. YES, some of us more left-leaning folks would prefer if Obama, hadn't decided to put the military tribunals back in place after he said he believed these cases should be tried in a legal court...but do you think we don't UNDERSTAND why he now feels he has to? Many, if not most of the unlawfully imprisoned may not have been terrorists when they went IN to Guantanamo, but now that they've been unlawfully imprisoned for years alongside hard-core terrorists, they've evidently become radicalized and would probably become terrorists if they are let OUT! They are now hateful and resentful towards the USA for unlawfully imprisoning them in the first place! And they've had no one in there to talk to for years except radical terrorists! You think that's not going to radicalize someone? So NOW that Bush fucked up by unlawfully locking innocent men away in a prison camp without a shred of evidence to hold them there on, and now that they've been left to rot in there for years, Obama has the problem of what to do with them. It's either allow these dangerous men their day in court and having no choice but release them for lack-of-evidence, or else let them be 'tried' by a military tribunal kangaroo-court just to make sure they don't get out. While I DO NOT agree Obama should do it, I can understand WHY he'd think he might have to, and it had nothing to do with BUSH ever being RIGHT about dumping them in a prison camp! It's because Bush made such a FREAKIN' MESS of it, Obama has no good options.

And while in the interest of freedom of information, I don't agree with the decision Obama made to block the release of torture photos, I at least UNDERSTAND why the Generals out in the field implored to him that they not be released! It's because it runs the risk of inflaming radicals even further & inspire attacks on us! That decision can in NO WAY WHATSOEVER be interpreted as "Bush being right" about torture and rendition! You freak! Are you out of your mind? Can I just say here how thoroughly disgusted I am by people like you who have brought this country so sickeningly low that we now actually have DEBATES about the value of tortures. Debates! About torture! This is where people like you and your nauseating friend Bush brought us, and although Bush made such a catastrophe out of it, Obama's stuck holding this mess with no good way to best to dispose of it, and although I might prefer it if Obama made different decisions about some of these Bush messes, one thing I'll NEVER PREFER would be to have Bush anywhere near any sort of decision-making process ever again!!! Obama's not perfect but he's a thousand times better than Bush. When I see people like YOU on tv Monica, I always ask myself "Where do they FIND them?" Where do they find flagrant idiots like you, who spout off your garbage on the airwaves? If I'm going bananas it'll never be because I'm ever gonna be forced to admit to myself that "Bush was right." It will only be because sick, demented people like you actually get to triumphantly GLOAT on national television about how "Bush was right" when he absolutely WAS NOT! I repeat there was NOTHING Bush ever did that was right, absolutely nothing! And maybe I go bananas when I hear people like you say offensive things Monica, but I'll NEVER be as off-the-wall as demented, sicko, weirdos like you! You belong in a mental hospital you deluded kook!

Hospital you deluded kook!

I AN OBAMA WRONG DON'T MAKE A BUSH RIQ

EDITORIAL CONTINUED FROM THE PREVIOUS PAGE

NOW THAT I'VE SET MONICA CROWLEY STRAIGHT, HERE'S HOW I'D REPLY TO PREZ OBAMA ON THESE SAME ISSUES

THE
CONSTITUTION?
?

JUSTICE?
?

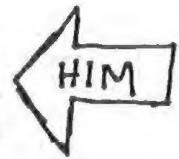
MILITARY
COMMISSIONS?
?

THE
SYSTEM?
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TORTURE
PHOTOS?
?

HONESTY?
?

Obama: We know al Qaeda is actively planning to attack us again. We know this threat will be with us for a long time, and that we must use all elements of our power to defeat it. Already, we've taken several steps to achieve that goal. For the first time since 2002, we're providing the strategic direction to take the fight to the extremists who attacked us on 9/11 in Afghanistan and Pakistan. We're investing in 21st century military and intelligence capabilities that will allow us to stay one step ahead of a nimble enemy. We've re-energized a global non-proliferation regime to deny the world's most dangerous people access to the world's deadliest weapons. And we've launched an effort to secure all loose nuclear materials within four years. We're building new partnerships around the world to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda. We've renewed American diplomacy so we once again have strength and standing to lead the world. These steps are critical to keep America secure. I believe in the long run we can't keep this country safe unless we enlist the power of our most fundamental values. The documents we hold in this very hall, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights aren't simply words written into aging parchment. They're the foundation of liberty and justice in this country, and a light that shines for all who seek freedom, fairness, equality, and dignity around the world. I stand here today as someone whose own life was made possible by these documents.



Me: As someone who saw the flaming monstrosities of the World Trade Center towers with my own naked eyes, I've long been bitterly offended Bin Laden and his men have been allowed by Bush to live free from justice. I watched similarly horror-stricken as Bush/Cheney dismantled & eroded the very documents you mention, in the NAME of "protecting" us from the future attacks. Bush's erosion has done NOTHING to bring Bin Laden to Justice, and so far, I don't see you doing much more. Moreover, when you allow the Bush system of Military Tribunals to stand, it doesn't equate with a system of "justice that shines for freedom, fairness, and equality."



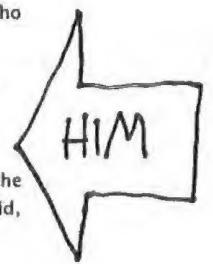
Obama: For over seven years, we've detained hundreds of people at Guantanamo. The system of military commissions in place succeeded in convicting a grand total of three suspected terrorists. Let me repeat that: three convictions in over seven years. Instead of bringing terrorists to justice, efforts at prosecution met setback, cases lingered on and the Supreme Court invalidated the entire system. Meanwhile, over 525 detainees were released from Guantanamo, not under my administration but under the previous one. Let me repeat that: Two-thirds of the detainees were released before I took office and ordered the closure of Guantanamo. Instead of building a durable framework for the struggle against al Qaeda, our government was defending positions that undermined the rule of law. In fact, part of the rationale for establishing Guantanamo in the first place was the misplaced notion a prison there *should* be beyond the law – a proposition the Supreme Court soundly rejected. First, whenever feasible, we'll try those who've violated American criminal laws in federal courts. Some have derided our federal courts as incapable of handling the trials of terrorists. They are wrong. The second category of cases involves detainees who violate the laws of war and are therefore best tried through military commissions. Military commissions have a history in the United States dating back to the Revolutionary War. They're an appropriate venue for trying detainees for violations of the laws of war and allow for the protection of sensitive sources and methods of intelligence-gathering. They allow for the presentation of evidence gathered from the battlefield that cannot always be effectively presented in federal courts. Some suggest this represents a reversal on my part. Look at the record. I said I supported the use of military commissions to try detainees, provided there were several reforms. Those are reforms we're now making. Instead of using flawed commissions my administration is bringing them in line with the rule of law. We'll no longer permit the use of evidence obtained using cruel, inhuman, or degrading interrogation methods. We'll no longer place the burden to prove that hearsay is unreliable, on the opponent of that hearsay. We'll give detainees greater latitude in selecting their own counsel and more protections if they refuse to testify. These reforms will make our military commissions more credible. I'll work on legislation to ensure the commissions are fair, legitimate, and effective. There are 240 people who've spent years in legal limbo. In dealing with this, we don't have the luxury of starting from scratch. We're cleaning up something that's, quite simply, a mess; a misguided experiment that's left in its wake a flood of legal challenges my administration is forced to deal with on a constant, daily basis and consumes the time of officials whose time should be spent on better protecting our country.



Me: I get it's not Bush's system anymore but it's still tinkering with his 'invalidated' system. Scrap it! Doesn't laboring over a faulty piece of crap always take longer than creating something valid from scratch?



Obama: I recently opposed the release of photos taken of detainees by U.S. personnel between 2002 & 2004. Individuals who violated standards of behavior in these photos have been investigated and held accountable. There's no debate whether what's reflected in the photos is wrong. Nothing's been concealed to absolve perpetrators of crimes. However, it's my judgment, informed by my national security team, releasing the photos would inflame anti-American opinion and allow our enemies to paint U.S. troops with a broad, damning, inaccurate brush, endangering them in theaters of war. There's a compelling reason not to release the photos. Americans are serving in harm's way. I've a solemn responsibility for their safety. Nothing would be gained by the release of the photos that matters more than the lives of our troops. I had to strike the right balance between transparency and national security. I ran for President promising transparency, and I meant what I said, but I'll never abandon the necessity to defend our troops. Here's the difference though: Whenever we can't release certain information for national security reasons, I'll insist on oversight of my actions by Congress or the courts.

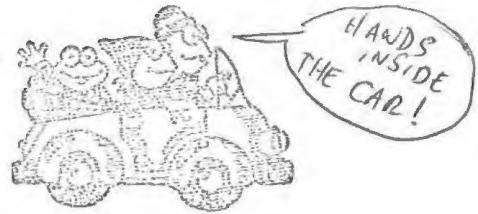


Me: When you do something wrong, you've got to have the integrity to reveal what you did to apologize. Are you believable to claim you're sorry for deeds you won't reveal the extent of? It's like a robber apologizing for theft when you can't know what he took & you have to be satisfied only his accomplices know. Can it protect our troops to be seen fighting for that principle?



RECORD REVIEWS

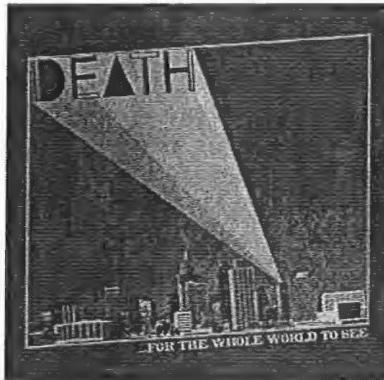
THESE ARE
OLD BANDS!



The Brats – The Lost Tapes, Copenhagen 1979. Arg! Records.

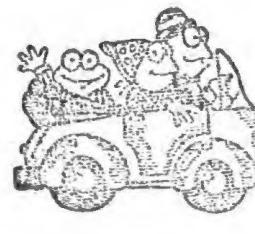
This is a completely different band from any of the other 1970's bands with the same name. This is a Danish band who are barely known to anyone outside of Denmark. In fact, it seems the primary reason why this unreleased album is finally seeing the light of day is that some members of this band went on to form a very popular Satanic heavy metal band called Mercyful Fate, with King Diamond. That would explain why this LP is being released on a record label that otherwise only releases metal. Happily, I can report there's virtually almost no trace of metal here except perhaps... just perhaps... on an occasional song here and there you might hear a vaguely metalish guitar solo that never lasts more than 2 seconds. Perfect! Otherwise it's pure punk rock, and definitely reminiscent of 70s UK punk, but a bit on the raw end of the spectrum. Song structures ape a blend of bands like The Lurkers, Pink-Flag-period Wire, and The Ramones. I'd say the lead singer isn't exactly 'talented' but he isn't bad either. He shouts adequately, if not uniquely. It's the songs that stand out here.

My favorite song is "I Do What I Wanna Do" which has a really inventive and original arrangement and sound. It's essential. Other good tunes include "Prostitute" which is quite Ramonesy. I'd describe "Zombie People" as somewhere between early Wire and early U.K. Subs. I really like the bass in particular on that song. Believe it or not, there's a song on here called "Mr. Normal" that uses a sound effect on the vocal that evokes The Chipmunks. That was certainly unexpected. I also dig the one finger/one note keyboard playing on "Ladies" with its echoed moan vocals over a heavy punk throb, punctuated by drum rolls. But not every song is a runaway winner. The most ambitious cut, "So Alone" falls short and suffers perhaps from an overdose of experimental sludge that drags the whole thing down, and at over 6 minutes in duration, is by far too long for what it is. Apart from this one failure though, the remainder of the album is strong overall. The lyrics have that interesting quality of disconnectedness often found in bands who sing in English when it's not their native language. I always enjoy that. The whole story behind this LP is that they had it recorded and it was going to be released for some indie label called Irmardz, but at the last minute, they got signed to CBS soon afterwards, and the major label didn't want the indie label album to be released, so the tapes got shelved and forgotten about. That is, until while going through his old things, the singer/bassist Yenz stumbled across the tapes again, hidden away in an old suitcase in his attic. Knowing that Mercyful Fate fans are complete-ists about anything remotely connected, this LP was released as an item of interest for them. But for a punk rock fan like me, with very little interest in metal, and virtually no awareness of Mercyful Fate apart from the little I'd read about them in a book titled 'Lucifer Rising', I just enjoy it as a fine punk rock LP that can be enjoyed on its own merit. For more on this record, visit www.metal-archives.com or www.myspace.com/bratz1980 Keep in mind though, that the songs featured in the myspace fansite dated around 1980 are not nearly as good and do not represent the 1979 songs that are heard on this album. It's funny how some bands can change so drastically in such a short time, while others may stay the same for years and years, Eh? Anyway do go ahead and check out the record, especially for "I Do What I Wanna Do." What a great song!



DEATH – For The Whole World To See. Drag City Records.

This album was never released back in 1974-75 when it was recorded, but it is interesting to learn there was an all-black punk band prior to groups like 1980's Bad Brains, 1979's Basement 5, and even before 1978's Pure Hell. Death were a Detroit band, and their sound is reminiscent of that sort of proto-punk, MCS, Stooges, and others with a pre-Ramones punk sound, and also unlike the faux-brother Ramones, Death's Bobby Hackney David Hackney and Dennis Hackney were actual brothers. In spite of their name, their sound was far from hackneyed. Interestingly to me, I think the band were great, but I have since learned that many people think they are no good, and that the only songs worth anything were "Keep On Knocking," and "Politicians In My Eyes" which just happened to be the two songs that were already released anyway (as a self-released single back in '75.) Frankly, I think those songs are good but the best song on the album by far is the previously unreleased Freakin' Out. I can understand though, that some may be off-put by the length of some of these songs. There are a lot of rather long songs, especially when you take into account that today's punk thrives on shorter numbers. But I just take into consideration that it was more common to have lengthy songs then. As a result of the length of many of these tunes however, there are only seven songs on the album. I felt that the vocals reminded me of Jimi Hendrix but Ronster thinks I am crazy. He thinks the whole record sucks. I think it is different, inventive, and even rather astonishing that it even exists. www.dragcity.com



RECORD REVIEWS - ACTUALLY THIS IS THE ONLY Record Review ON THIS PAGE Below it Are CD and LIVE Reviews.

CARBONAS



CARBONAS LP

The LP kicks off with an instant rip-roarin' classic called Phone Booth. It's my favorite song on the album. It zips right into Journey To The End, a pretty good punker, followed by Didn't Tell You A Lie which has a hint of powerpop in it. Don't Know Why reminds me of melodic late '70s UK punk and side A closes out with I'm Schizo, a frantic punk attack! Side B opens up with Hate You, another fine example of classic style melodic punk with a rock'n'roll feel. Trapped In Hell has a touch of The Adolescents about it because it sort of sounds like a cousin to their big hit "Amoeba" and the singer Greg King, even sounds a bit like Tony Adolescent on it. Frustrate Me in particular reveals the singer to have a good feel for what he's doing, and the LP closes out with Assvogel, another strong number. All in all, it's a really good album, well played and produced very nicely.

www.goner-records.com - Goner Records 2152 Young Avenue, Memphis TN. 38104



FLY ASHTRAY – Reports CD. The first song on this cd is called LT., Report, and it starts out sort of country & Western-ish with something that sounds like slide guitar and a lazy vocal, but in ends sort of like progressive psychedelia. The next song Fucky Doodles reminds me a lot of Pavement, with a frantic guitar. There's also a bit that reminds me of The Fall's Mark E. Smith going "Whuh huh u huh u huh." The next song has a delicate melody that hits me somewhere between Loaded-era Velvet Underground and Adventure-era Television, with maybe even some Byrds thrown in there for good measure. Really pleasurable, but I do not know why it should be called Lord Love A Duck! The second half of the song is rather trippy! (In a good way.) Track four is called Mulk! What odd titles, huh? This one reminds me of Syd Barrett-era Pink Floyd, with some Third Bardo in there too. It has that outer-space sound about it. Sort of eerie, like ghosts in outer-space. This is one cut where you really notice what innovative musicians Fly Ashtray are. Track 5 continues the tradition of inexplicable song titles with Montran! I dig the electric piano and trumpet on this track. The guitar solo has a nasty bite, while the rest of the tune has a jaunty feel. A real toe-tapper. The next song, Mindpants, is for certain my favorite song on the whole album. It has a great sound, and in particular I like how the guitar bass and drums work off each other. The melody of this thing is so infectious I had to play the song 15 times in a row the first time I put this cd on. I especially like the part where the vocalist is singing something about "Look at your lies, stealing ties" the guitar solo and keyboard parts are so amazing. I could listen to Mindpants all day and never stop being fascinated by it. In some other world where good inventive music is actually appreciated this would be the big million-selling pop hit off the album, I'm sure! I find Mindpants utterly beautiful and compelling. But the next song, Paranoid Mr. Snoid is worth the wait of sitting (or dancing) though Mindpants fifteen times, because Paranoid Mr. Snoid is a tremendous instrumental that has this great big lumbering quality to it, but it's a strong and athletic lumbering if that makes any sense. Imagine a really powerful elephant moving pretty fast. It definitely has a tough sound. The fade out at the end with the chiming guitars was really beautifully done. To Sir With Ignells is the next song, and again it has me thinking a bit like early Pink Floyd, or maybe like a few lesser known psychedelic bands like The Poets or Kaleidoscope, if you know who they are. I might be imagining a little bit of the Mothers of Invention in here too. You gotta give this band a lot of credit for the taste they display in their influences. The next song is called Creeb, and it's the shortest song and perhaps is the number that punk rocks out the most, with a speedy-speedy tempo, nasty guitar distorto, and a stinging attack. Vocals are a high pitched whine. The next (the 10th) track is called Gorga, and if that name Gorga sounds like the name of a giant reptilian beast tromping on a city with his massive three-toed claws...that's exactly what the song sounds like too - very cataclysmic sounding, like slow methodical destruction. Next we listen to Why Is There Aire? A good enough question to ponder, I suppose. Very pretty chiming guitars again, once more reminding me of Television, but I am noticing these guys actually deliver much better melodies than Television did. They have that rare ability to take you away with their music to some alternative other place. Final song on the cd is called Rheingold Unicorn Zombies R Us. This song seems to be about crimes, like murder and theft, although delivered in a rather un-threatening tone-of-voice. It's sort of an epic of sorts, divided into a few parts parts, most of them plodding along at a slower pace, but in such a way that it makes you want to plod along with it. I especially like when it gets very loud and noisy and intense, like which would be the last third of the song.

www.flyashtray.net and/or www.myspace.com/flyashtray

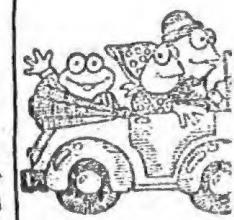
FLY ASHTRAY live at Cakeshop. 5/8/09. In spite of having known about this band since at least 1986 or 87, I have never ever seen them play. I always wanted to, but I never even heard about them playing until this show, otherwise I would have seen them a lot sooner! I've had three of their singles for years! Even though I hadn't seen them before, I'm sure they must've played together a whole lot because they play like a band of musicians who know each other perfectly, just like only people who've played together for years can. What can I say? They click! This show in particular really got good whenever they pulled out some of their faster and harder-hitting numbers. There were even spots during the show where the guitars seemed to evoke "Pictures of Matchstick-Men" period Status Quo! I often found myself just shutting my eyes and getting lost in the music. I thought the drummer was particularly "on" during the show. He kept my feet boppin' along. It was quite a long set too, which left me very satisfied. If there was any drawback for me, it was their cover of Paul McCartney's song "Jet." I'm sorry, I'll never enjoy that song no matter who performs it. It's just a stinker. Otherwise though, 99% of the show was great. I would like to add a brief word about the opening act R. Stevie Moore. (There is a Fly Ashtray connection because he wrote the lyrics to their song To Sir With Ingalls.) I'd heard of him before, though I do not remember where. Ron said he'd been hearing about him since 1975, 76, or 77 at least, but neither of us had ever seen him before or heard his music. I have to say, I don't "get it." He did play one song I thought was really great, but it was just that one good song while everything else I didn't like at all. Maybe I need someone to explain to me who R. Stevie Moore is and why he has such a prominent reputation in underground music circles...but then again, if it has to be explained to me, I can't say it's coming across then, is it? Fly Ashtray though, I'd see again anytime, man! They were really great, playing with lots of unique ideas.



CD
Review.



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The Bowery Poetry Club
308 Bowery, NYC 10012 / 212.614.0505
Bleecker & Houston, across from CBGB's

NOT ANYMORE ITAIN'T
DIDN'T YA HEAR?
THAT PLACE IS OUT
OF BIZ. THEY NEED
TO UPDATE THAT.

10:00 Dave Thomas \$10 The American premiere of
the "Ghost Line Diary," a spoken word piece
composed for the 14th Genoa International Poetry
Festival in June 2008.

LIVE REVIEWS



I HAVE BEEN LISTENING TO A LOT OF MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL RADIO LATELY AND REALLY ENJOYING IT. BESIDES WFMU IT IS THE ONLY OTHER RADIO I LISTEN TO. I FIND OUT ABOUT A LOT OF NEW AND INTERESTING BANDS I'M SURE I'D NEVER GET TO HEAR OTHERWISE. IT'S ALSO FUN TO HEAR HOW MUCH ALL THE DEEJAYS CURSE!

Live review: Kevin Seconds & Kepi Ghoulie, 2/18/09, Generation Records, t-shirt aisle.

For many years since the break-up of their respective hardcore and punk rock bands, (Seven Seconds and The Groovie Ghoulies, respectively, - actually Seven Seconds never really broke up but go on hiatus periodically) Kevin and Kepi have been doing a little acoustic act together way out there where they live in Sacramento, California. They finally decided to take this little act out on the road for an east coast tour. Kepi does his solo act first, along with Kepi-Band bass player Dino performing alongside him, and Kevin acting as percussionist, using brushes on his acoustic guitar case as a drum, along with a tambourine. Kepi's solo material is similar to his other acts, (Ghoulies, Haints, etc.) in that it is peppy, fun, charming, upbeat, cute, silly, and endearing. He performed some of the great potential hits from his solo records, such as Hey Kepi, Let's Go and Supermodel Versus You, as well as some lesser-known songs and versions of other people's songs like Hank Williams Sr. All of it has catchy hooks and memorable melodies. The toe-tapping it induces is certainly irresistible. After this first part of the show was concluded, Kevin Seconds did his set. Kevin's solo material is far from the ultra-speed hardcore he is known for from his band Seven Seconds. Instead he performs music that is quite folk oriented in the best sense. It is authentic, earnest and tasteful, delivered the way the only the very best top-notch folk songs are properly be performed, in the tradition of Bob Dylan, Odetta, Buffy St. Marie, Pete Seeger, or Phil Ochs without copying any of the afore-mentioned pioneers, and without even a trace of any of today's intentionally awkward song-constructions, self-absorbed indulgences and moderninity that contaminates much too much of the depressing so-called "folk" singer/songwriters who pick up acoustic guitars nowadays. I would describe it as a refreshing return to a nearly lost tradition, yet firmly standing individually on its own merit.

Two Tears / Goon Squad - 3/4/09 Cake Shop NYC.

There was another band before Two Tears but the less said about them the better. They only had two good songs (the last two) and the rest of it was really slow and dreary. Two Tears were billed as ex-Red Aunts, but they do not have a Red Aunts sound, not really. To me it sounded quite a bit like Pylon at their best. Choppy, buzzy and driving. Let me just say I loved them! They had a great stage presence and played, oh, so very well. They also had a warm and engaging on-stage demeanor that really endears you to the band. Very real. Goon Squad (who apparently include one of the Toilet Boys), in contrast were high on theatrics. I loved the costumes and wigs and the oddball-themed songs played in a variety of eccentric styles. There were a lot of ideas in this band and you will be amazed at how big of a sound they can get with only one guitarist, a drummer, and occasional keyboards. They also seemed to be augmented by some sort of a programmed computer laptop in the corner. One thing they really had going for them was humor and I liked the girl/boy shared vocals. They are surely another band to watch for.

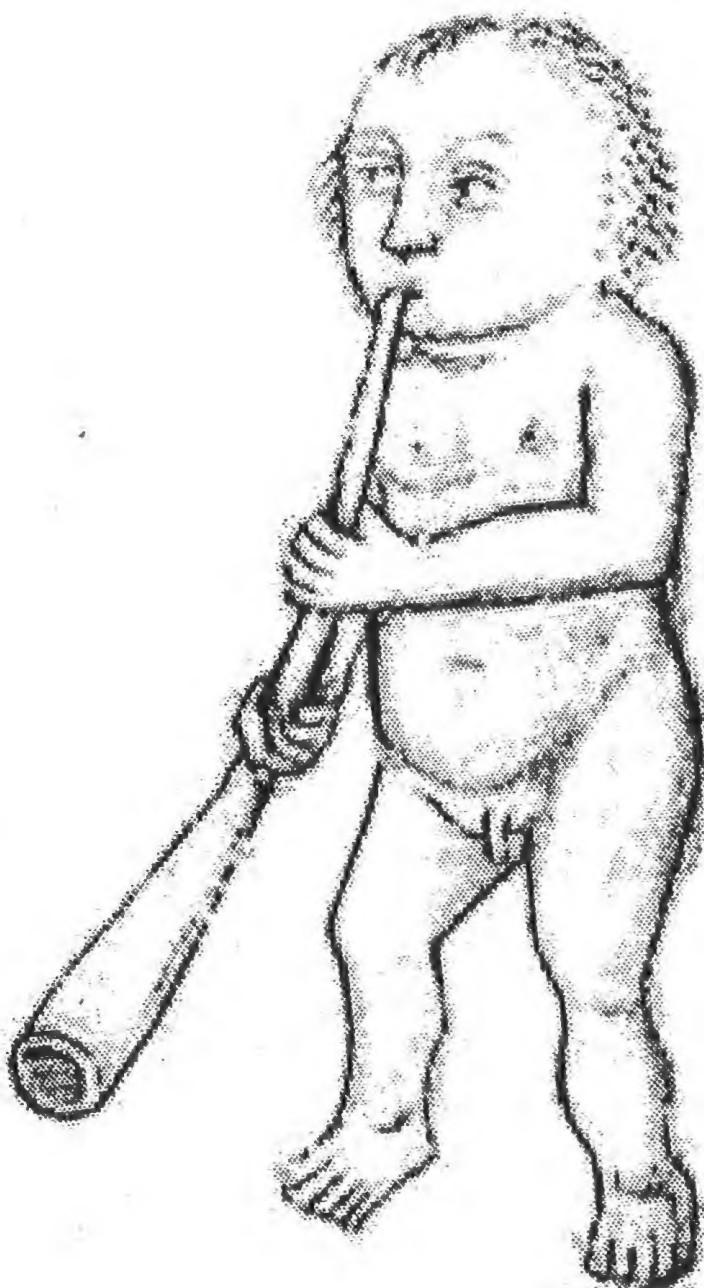


SEE?
NO MENTION OF
THE OTHER
GUY.

BOWERY POETRY CLUB
What the hell is
going on here?
April 29th
600 D Question!

Imaginary Icons

ICONIC TONIC: Getting My Art-Punk Refreshed With THE IMAGINARY ICONS by Tony Arena



In some dark, eerie New York City bar or club, you may by chance be surprised to encounter a local band with a fresh sound that's reminiscent of such late 70s/early eighties groups as The Swell Maps, Pylon, Gang of Four, Mission of Burma, Catholic Discipline, Warsaw (pre-Joy Division), Alternative TV and the Desperate Bicycles. If you do, that band is most likely to be the one and only Imaginary Icons. With electrifying songs like She's Fading, Mirror Panics, and New Face of France they're aggressively bringing that hot, stinging sound to today's eager ears with a 21st century touch. The band consists of: Eddie Icon on drums, Tom Dash on bass, Benzoil Peroxide on guitar, synth, and saxophone, as well as Sir Vaylance on second guitar and they all sat down with me for some drinks, chips, and yakity-yak.

Violin Outbreak: Here I am with the Imaginary Icons. Hi guys! Your band, it seems to me, has three different songwriters, because Benzoil, Sir Vaylance, and Tom Dash all have their own songs that they sing leads on. Is this a correct perception?

Eddie Icon: Yes it is. And I'm the new member, my name is Sir Eddie Batolomei. I joined in the summer of 2008, and prior to being part of the Icons legend I was in different bands in New York, very underground and not known, and not playing out.

V.O.: Not playing out? Not even getting out of the rehearsal room?

Eddie: No, there was a lot of stage-fright involved with the other members and that's why I decided to get out of the basement and venture into the sunlight.

Tom Dash: And it's so far, so good.

Ed: Yes!

V.O.: And are you writing anything?

Ed: I do but I haven't brought it into the band yet because I write in Spanish and I would like the guys to become multi-lingual and maybe this summer it will happen.

V.O.: (To the others): Would you do that?

Benzoil Peroxide: We already do, actually. For one song we have a spot where Ed sings in Spanish.

V.O.: What song is that?

Ed: "Beers and Bikes." It's a new song. Benzoil is the author of the song.

Ben: "Beards and Bikes." But as far as songs go, I think everyone contributes their own parts. I think the one person that writes the actual song might come up with the main riff or whatever, but then...

V.O.: So you do write some songs together?

Tom: Some are collaborative.

Ben: Yeah, I don't think any of our songs are solely, every single part, written out by one guy.

Sir Vaylance: Usually, it's someone brings in the structure of a song and then everyone else picks up their part.

Ed: It evolves into an Icons song after a few takes at rehearsals.

Sir V.: We actually do a lot of jamming at practice but that doesn't find its way into the songwriting processes, as much as we'd like it to, because we're like, "Oh, that sounds cool!" But...

Ben: A lot of our rehearsals don't even sound anything like typical Imaginary Icons, they're just like free-form, crazy, twenty minute jams.

Sir V.: ...but sometimes a song comes out of just jamming too. We might stumble upon a new riff or something.

V.O.: Can you give an example of one that may have developed that way?

Tom: Maybe, "Hardware Store?"

Ben: "Fun With Capital."

Tom: That's one I was just thinking of, because I kind of wrote the riff, ripping off, um, I was ripping off The Fall.

V.O.: Oh, my favorite band.

Tom: So I wrote a riff, and that became a song, and it was just sort of from a jam. I have a difficult time writing lyrics so Ben came up with the words for that song and he came up with the bridge for it, I think. I think actually for that one we came up with a bridge that sounded pretty cool, and then our old drummer Nate, (*Nate Red formerly of the Tie Reds*) said "Oh you should do it in a minor chord instead." So then we did that for the bridge, and then we worked on the chorus or whatever and then he suggested a different riff for that, and I was like "Okay, that works," and he handled the lyrics, Benzoil did, so from a jam it became a song, and that was collaborative.

V.O.: Oakey doaks, well then let's talk a little bit about the lyrics. When you begin to write your lyrics; do you consciously say to yourself "I want to write about this topic" or do your lyrics develop some other way? And that's a question for anybody who writes a lyric.

Tom: We all probably have different answers to that question.

Ed: Yes, I have to agree with Tom. What they come up with depends on their different styles.

Sir V.: I usually do kind of like *intuitive* things. I might have some general idea or a phrase in a notebook, and then I just start working off of that and it falls into place.

V.O.: Can you describe a little bit about how this band came to be? Why the name?

Tom: We came to be through the Magnetic Field bar, (a now defunct music nightspot formerly on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn.) I used to DJ there a bunch and booked some shows, and then Ben gravitated to that place, (Ed. Note: *Gravitated / Magnetic Field! Get It? Har-har!*) because he knew Lee (co-owner, *Lee Greenfield*) through the music scene and old bands he was in, and so he would come to that bar for shows and deejay nights and stuff. I was deejaying when I got to meet Ben through Lee.

Ben: I used to come see The Shop Fronts too.

Tom: The Shop Fronts were my old band. We were starting to talk about "Art-Punk" and maybe something past 1970s punk that's a little more artsy or maybe a little weird or something, because I liked to spin that a lot. Ben was telling me about his old band in Detroit, Rael Rean, and they were very, very like punk, 70s, new wave, art-punk, damaged, Devo, whatever you want to call it.

V.O.: I notice that you very specifically avoided the term 'post-punk.' I would assume that some people would try to classify your music as post-punk, but I don't particularly like that term. How do you feel about it?

Ben: Yes, it's been very over-used, lately.

Tom: It's over-used, and I think the most clichéd for post-punk is really, really wimpy or maybe not wimpy, like electronic, dancey, post-Human-League. That's what I think real post-punk is, what the British scene became in like the mid-80's and I don't think... I mean they started using that, I guess, for stuff like The Fall, and...

V.O.: I've heard it used for everything from Pere Ubu, to Wire, The Fall, The Wipers, The Pop Group, and all those kinds of groups that interestingly to me, started at exactly the same time as the other punk groups started so how can they be "post" what they are actually currently "in?"

Ben: Well, I think it's because they started sounding a little bit ahead-of-the-times at the time. You know what I'm saying? I mean both Wire and The Fall didn't really fall within that same scene with The Sex Pistols and The Clash. They were doing something a little bit more interesting and they definitely had their own sound that was different, and I think that sound became more popular a couple of years later.

V.O.: Why this particular branch of the music for you guys?

Sir V.: I think it was just something that we all love and was a common interest. Something we gravitated towards growing up and always listened to, and it feels natural.

Ben: For me personally, I've just been in so many punk bands I just got kinda sick of just playing straight punk. It just got kind of boring. I wanted to...

V.O.: ...give it some flair?

Ben: Yeah, just like, have it be a little bit more thoughtful and experimental, because I just got bored with playing the typical... which I love to listen to still... but I just got bored with playing it.

Tom: I think similarly with me too, with The Shop Fronts, I would try to bring some of this sort of songwriting into that, which still might have been totally punk rock, totally 70s and all that, but maybe something a little different or whatever, which made it sort of not really fit with that band. So I thought after that I wanted to make a switch from playing drums to playing bass. I had an interest in bass and I wanted to switch gears and get into something more psychedelic, arty, whatever you wanna call it.

V.O.: Eddie, you were telling me before that all of this kind of stuff was new to you. So when one of these guys comes up with a melody or tune, how do you go about developing a rhythm that fits to it?

Ed: I listen to the guys, listen to what they're playing and try to fit in with the left-foot, and the right-foot, and the left-hand, and the right-hand! And I try not to THINK about... if it's disco, or rock, or if it's post-punk, or pre-punk, or The Ventures or whatever. I just like playing drums!

V.O.: When did you realize you have a talent for that?

Ed: I am still looking for that! I think of myself as a mediocre player.

V.O.: Do you???

Ed: Yes, because I listen to a lot of jazz. I've been listening to a lot of new stuff since I got to New York from Puerto Rico in 1987, and I became very aware of the jazz scene and the masters, like Art Blakey, Tony Williams, and Chick Web. You name whatever era, 1920s, 1930s, until the mid-70s with Jean Luc Ponty, John McLaughlin, and they guys who played with those guys, and Return to Forever, (a Latin flavored jazz-fusion band from the 70s founded by Chick Corea), and so I'm trying to still find that.

V.O.: And so how does someone with your jazz musical background find these punk guys, or how did they find you?

Ed: Through art-handling.

Sir V.: I work with Eddie.

Ed: We work together in the museum world.

Sir V.: I actually never... well, we were looking for a new drummer...

Ed: ...and it was by coincidence that Ted knows our colleague who was on the phone...

Sir V.: ...and I knew he played drums, but I had no idea if he was a good drummer or what kind of drummer he was and...

Ed: ...and I had already seen them, I went to see them in, uh, Williamsburg by the Williamsburg Bridge, some club down there... I don't remember the name but it had like a back yard...

Sir V.: Oh, yeah?

V.O.: Union Pool?

Ed: ...with a big mural on its south, at South 6th Street... South 5th Street...

Tom: Maybe, The Local?

Ed: Anyway, I went to see them and Nate was playing drums that night, and I was like, "I like this band!"

V.O.: Right away you liked them?

Ed: I said to myself, "This is music I can play." I have always enjoyed playing drums. No matter if I'm playing a sucky beat or the same beat I've been playing for the past twenty years but with different people.

Sir V.: But, it's funny, I asked Eddie if he was interested and he was like "sure, give me a CD" so I gave him a CD of some songs, and when we got together for the first time we said "okay, let's try this one," he played it straight through immediately, and so we were like "okay, let's play the next one."

Ben: After the first thirty seconds I knew this was the drummer for us. He hit the hell out of the drums. He hit them super-hard.

Ed: That's what happens when you practice in the basement for twenty years, and by chance you end up in some music studio and making good friends.

V.O.: You've got a 12 inch and two seven inches out. Are any of these records on cd as well? Explain why the vinyl releases?

Ben: It's just vinyl. We're all vinyl collectors and vinyl collectors like listening to vinyl over CDs.

Ed: I think there's nothing like putting the needle down on the record. I love that popcorn.

Ben: Now we realize that when we do shows, people ask "is this on CD" and you always feel pretentious, at least I do, it's like we should have, probably, at least a CD-R.

Tom: I find that when we played shows where it's sort of like the people our age or older that see us; they get what we're doing and enjoy it. They will say, "Oh, I remember bands like this. This is a breath of fresh air." They're into it. They didn't expect it because we were the opener for a headliner...they always want a CD of it and we never have one.

Sir V.: Oh yeah? We should get a CD.

Tom: Usually the older ones want a CD and we say "nah," while younger ones want the vinyl...

Sir V.: We put vinyl out because we wanted to. Because it's fun.

V.O.: When you look out into the audience and see the people looking back at you, what sort of expressions do you typically see on their faces?

Tom: Horror.

Ed: Amazement.

Ben: Mouths open wide.

Sir V.: What?

Ed: I can't believe they got booked to play here!

Tom: We usually see the back of their heads, because they're running away.

Ed: But at the same time they stick around enough to say "Great show!"

Tom: We like to sort of put on a high energy good live show, and people are usually into it.

Ed: Our sets are furious sex. It's like, "WAAAAAAOOAH!...done!" And it's done. And you're like "That's it? I want more!"

Tom: We really keep the energy going without many lulls or pauses, because I think none of us really know how to interact with the audience!

V.O.: Well that sort of plays into the sound of the band too, to have a little bit of a distance there.

Tom: No, I'd like to be a little more engaging and warm with the audience, but it seems like we're better when we just blaze through the set and just go nuts.

V.O.: What is your opinion of New York City's live music scene lately? Is there anything you'd like to see change about it?

Ben: We need more bands like us. More diverse good bands.

Tom: The live scene lately seems to be gravitating more towards private lofts and alternative spaces, and it seems like the Manhattan clubs are a thing of the past. I mean there are Mercury Lounge and The Cake Shop, and that's almost about it. There's not a large amount of clubs in Manhattan, it's all in Brooklyn.

V.O.: And even in Brooklyn they're closing.

Tom: Traditional rock clubs, there doesn't seem to be many of those anymore. It doesn't seem like there is, but there will always be a scene. I feel like we have not really fit into any scene in New York very successfully, and we play a lot of good shows with good bands but we don't seem to have a repeat line-up, like the Dot-Dash shows I used to do, there was always a core group of local bands that would always play together, and I don't feel we're a part of a core group of any local bands that play together. Nobody ever asks us to play a show. I've always booked our shows.

Sir V.: I don't really feel like, part of a scene, which is sort of disappointing.

Ben: We have to look to Boston for that. We're good friends with The Konks and they've asked us to play out there a lot. And The Tampoffs.

Tom: And we do really great there. They love us, they know all the songs, they play us on the radio and we have great shows with a group of people who love to see us play.

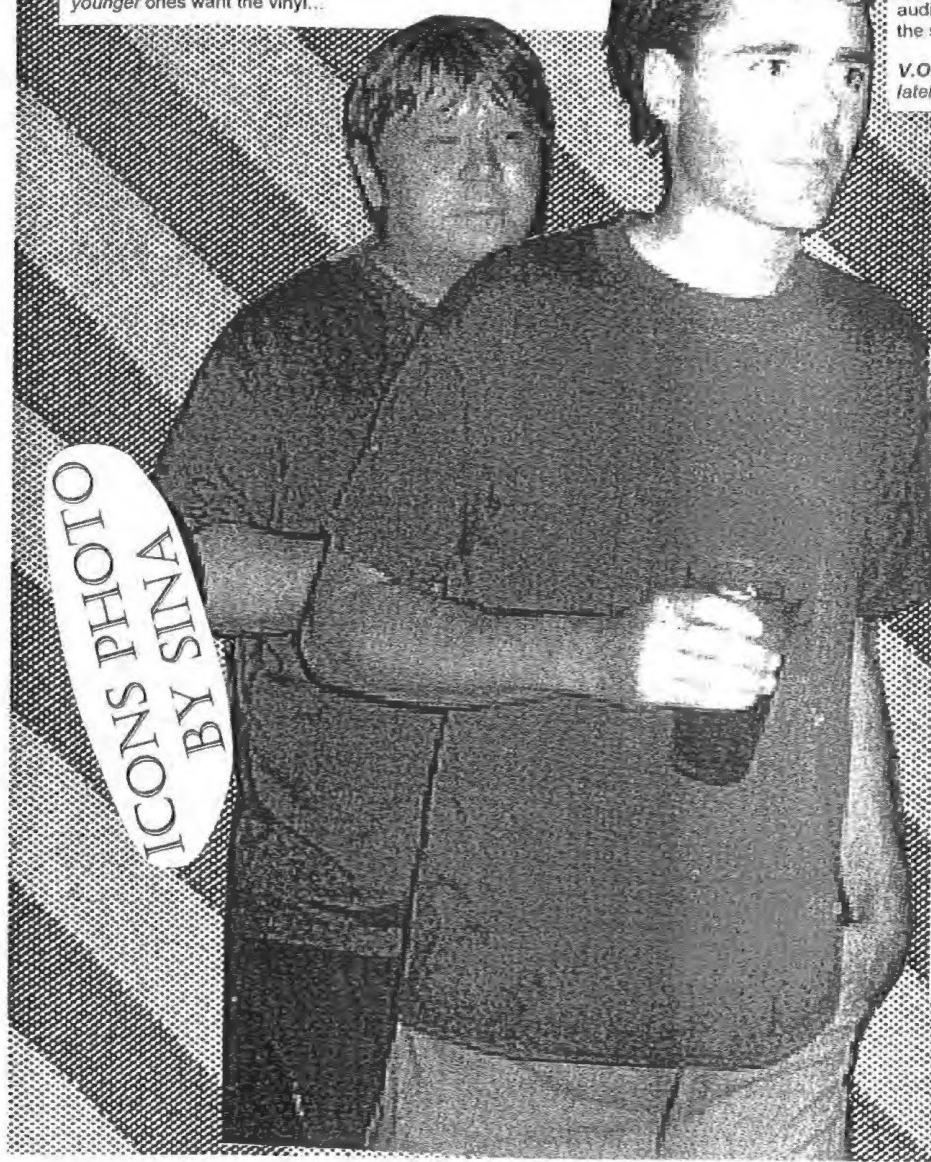
V.O.: I remember reading that you were playing live on the radio somewhere, was that in Boston?

Tom: No, We did that at WFMU.

Sir V.: And we just did a Breakthrough Radio show. An internet radio show.

Ben: It's not that successful.

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BY SINA





Tom: Well, I think playing on WFMU can be a great experience but it wasn't our best performance. I don't think the sound came out that great.

Ben: And this last one my synth failed to work right before we were supposed to record. A circuit chip fried. There was no sound. So I had to use a different keyboard, which was really awkward because on a lot of songs I rely on that Yamaha so I had to toy with it and make up on the spot what I was going to do. I was frazzled in that sense.

V.O.: I suppose you could have played only the songs you don't play keyboards on.

Tom: We rehearsed those certain songs though and it was a recording studio too so it was pretty high-tech and we wanted to be spot on. It was free recording time so we made the best of it.

Ben: It's free recording time so let's record this new stuff. The end result was fine.

Ed: I don't agree. I didn't think it was good. If that was supposed to be a recording in a controlled environment then I don't think the engineer spent enough time to actually *listen* to what he was recording. There were a lot of spikes. If you'd just *pay attention* to what's coming out through the speakers you'd be ABLE to notice the crackling of the voices that is distorting the speakers. I played the recording on a different system and I was like "wait a minute," it's in the headset and it's in the CRAPPY computers! It's a poor quality recording but I was happy for the experience.

V.O.: You were?

Sir V.: I was just excited to be in the room where it looked like Suzanne Vega recorded her albums there.

V.O.: I don't understand. You were TOLD that she had?

Ben: No, they had picture of her up.

Sir V.: And CD's on the wall. I assumed she had recorded her stuff there.

Ben: And also Olivia Newton John recorded there.

Sir V.: Really? Now that's a good time!

Ben: Also, Toots & The Maytells.

V.O.: Was your photograph taken and put up there on the wall?

Ben: Absolutely not!

Tom: Um, you know, it wasn't now that I think of it!

V.O.: If your band could double-bill with any band that you've never been billed with before, who would you choose and why?

Tom: LiliPUTI!

V.O.: They're another one of my favorite bands, and you do one of their songs, but you leave out my favorite part though.

Ben: Which part??

V.O.: The part at the very end where she screams, "Oh, mother! Get out! Get out now!"

Tom: That's my fault. I'm very bad with lyrics.

V.O.: You need that part because it's a song about a DC-10 plane crash.

Tom: Hmm, what other bands? Mission of Burma would be pretty cool. Or John Coltrane circa 1967, but we can't go back in time so that's not going to work. Wire, because they're so great.

Sir V.: We should be banned from saying "Wire."

Tom: Wire gets mentioned a lot with us.

Sir V.: How about Faust? I think our jams in practice sound like what Faust were up to. Kraut Rock. Can.

Ben: Captain Beefheart.

Sir V.: Yeah! Let's play with Beefheart!

Tom: ...or Chrome! I'd love to play with Chrome, that would be cool.

Sir V.: What if we opened for Springsteen at the Superbowl?

V.O.: What really wracks your nerves about being in Imaginary Ic...

Tom: Interviews! Can't stand 'em!

V.O.: Well then we can wrap this one up pretty soon, then!

Tom: Wracks my nerves? Wow! I didn't know this was going to be like therapy, here! I thought it was gonna be, let's hang out and talk about music! I guess I touched on this earlier, it's the lack of love from New York City. We have amazing opportunities and we've done really well and we get it from (WFMU deejay) Terre T., and we've got great response from the people who support our band, Terre toot the horn for us all the time. I just wish we'd mesh with the circuit.

V.O.: Is there any subject that we haven't talked about that you were hoping to discuss tonight, or something else you'd really like read of V.O. to know?

Ben: We should talk about our Homosexuals experiences.

Tom: Wait, I want to hear what wracks their nerves!

Sir V.: Oh I don't know.

V.O.: Well, Sir Vaylance is so cool it's hard to imagine anything bothers him.

Tom: Oh, they do!

V.O.: Do they?

Tom: He keeps it bottled up!

Ed: He's worked for years on that technique.

Sir V.: Someday I'll blow up. No, I can't think of anything, except I was disappointed about how the single cover came out on the OFF THE GRID b/w FUN WITH CAPITAL record. The mock up was graphically better.

Ben: For me it was backing up Bruno from The Homosexuals. We spent a lot of time and effort on that and it seemed like we played a couple of good shows, but I wish we would have gotten more well-advertised shows, because it seemed like almost a waste of time. I was good for us, because I loved playing with Bruno and playing those songs because I love the songs. Those songs were really difficult to figure out because he's not a guitar player, so basically all had to figure out the riffs. There was a lot of effort that had to go into it, so we basically had to put our band on hold just to be able to play with him.

Tom: And all those shows were like pieced together at the last minute on a Monday night.

Ben: I wished we could have played at least one of two of those shows that were well-advertised.

Sir V.: It was a really great opportunity and really bizarre how it came about. You know, I didn't even know of the band until a few years before that and I immediately loved them. I said; "Aw, I love this band they're so good!" Then a couple of years later, I'm hanging out with the singer, playing the songs and backing him up. That's crazy.

Tom: He's a really amazing songwriter and performer and a charismatic front man.

Sir V.: Not just charismatic on stage! He's like that in practice!

Tom: In real life, that's just how he is. He never has an off-button, he's always on!



V.O.: That maybe wracked your nerves but it also sounds like it was a thrilling experience.

Ben: It was definitely both. I just wish it could have been shared with more people.

Sir V.: It was mostly a good experience that needed to be seen by a bigger audience.

V.O.: What's the biggest show you've played?

Sir V.: The Black Lips at Southpaw. They're so popular now! The Music Hall at Williamsburg.

Tom: One of the best bigger shows was when we opened up for Be Your Own Pet at Maxwell's because a lot of people saw us and it was almost sold-out by the time we were on stage.

Sir V.: That's true. At the Black Lips show there wasn't that many people in the audience yet when we were on. It was a big show, but not particularly big for us.

Ben: We also opened for The Avengers!

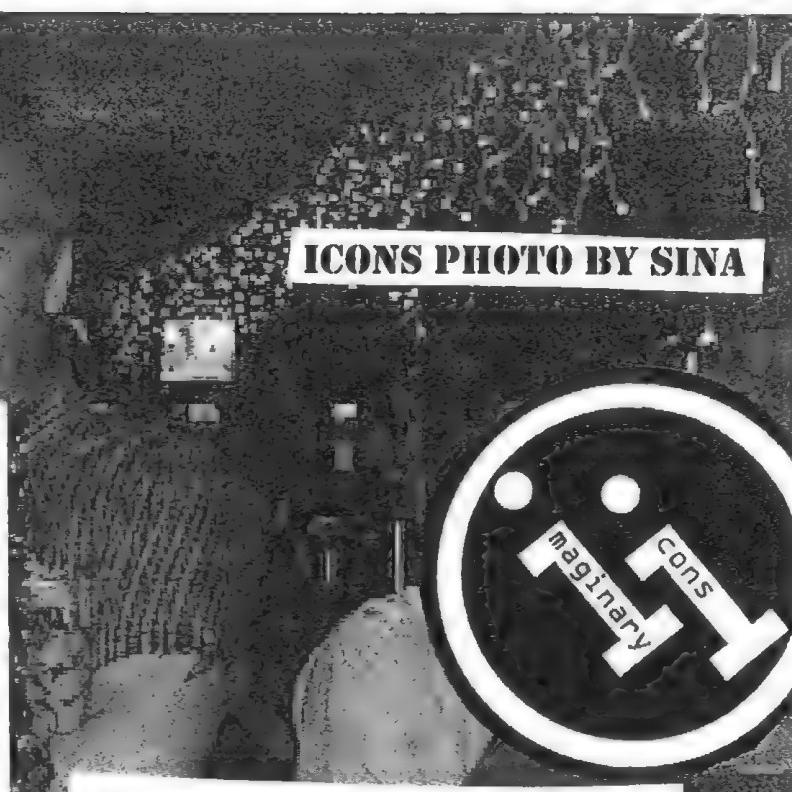
Sir V.: At Maxwell's, people are always more enthusiastic too. You go out of New York, whether it's Boston, or Maxwell's in New Jersey... it's just over the river!

V.O.: New York audiences are more jaded, or more bored, so you really have to work hard to win them over. It makes you tougher.

Ed: It's like when a homeless guy comes up with a sandwich and he's like: "Wuuuhgruagh ughahhblugh!"

Sir V.: How are you going to transcribe that?

V.O.: I'll just write "he makes a guttural sound." Anything else you want to add?



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Sir V.: We've got a new seven inch record coming. I was listening to the test-pressing of our new seven inch. The a-side is LUCIFER RISE and the b-side is HARDWARE STORED.

Ben: This will be the first release we'll be doing ourselves, self-released.

V.O.: Is the relationship with Eric of Daggerman Records severed, since he moved out of Brooklyn to California?

Tom: No! No! He's doing really well and he has a lot of bands, and he just released our twelve inch, but we wanted to do it on our own just to get it out. I'm sure we'll do something down the road again. He's got some other project he's working on.

V.O.: What about that other label Plastic Idol?

Sir V.: We don't have any contract with any of these record labels or anything.

V.O.: Because releasing your own records could get expensive.

Sir V.: We saved up. We took all our savings for this one.

Tom: We have a band fund.

V.O.: When can the readers of V.O. look forward to that release?

Tom: As soon as we get the covers done. Probably in about a month or a month and a half, late Spring, early Summer!

V.O.: We'll be watching out for it. Thanks guys!

Visit The Imaginary Icons MySpace Page at:
www.myspace.com/imaginaryicons

Imaginary Icons discography:

EYE-CONS b/w FADE Debut 7 inch EP. Daggerman Records. (4 diff. color sleeves) 600 copies.

OFF THE GRID b/w FUN WITH CAPITAL. 7 inch single. Plastic Idol Records. Clear vinyl. 600 copies.

IMAGINARY ICONS. 12 inch EP. (45rpm) Daggerman Records. Black vinyl. 500 copies.

Coming soon! - HARDWARE STORED b/w LUCIFER RISE 7 inch single.

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DEAN'S CORNER:



DEAN'S CORNER by The Dean of Rock N Roll!

The Naked Heroes are a new 2-piece husband and wife rock-n-roll band from Brooklyn. They are great! The new record is done and will be released in July. See them on July 25th at Glasslands in Williamsburg, Brooklyn for their record release show.



The Candy Snatchers final LP/CD, "Down At Delilah's," is done. No exact word on when it will be out. It features 13 blazing tracks featuring the very last recordings of the late Matthew Odileus. Singer Larry May is now in Born Loose with former Snuka guitarist Suke and the rhythm section from Nova Express. They totally rock - do not miss them.

Former Raunch Hands singer Michael Chandler has been ridiculously busy with his new high-energy gospel combo The Lost Crusaders. Their debut CD, "Have You Heard About The World?", has been released on Spain's Everlasting Records. The recording features guest vocals from Jon Spencer and Laura Cantrell. The songs are quite infectious. Buy it. Also in former Raunch Hands news, drummer Mike "Sharky" Edison released his hilariously amazing autobiographical book "I Have Fun Everywhere I Go: Savage Tales of Pot Porn Punk Rock Pro Wrestling Talking Apes Evil Bosses Dirty Blues American Heroes and the Most Notorious Magazines in the World." It kinda rules. He made recording to go along with it produced by Jon Spencer. He has been performing live and loud readings with Michael Chandler, Jon Spencer, Hollis Queens and Dean Rampler as his back-up band. It's a trip, man - you should see it.



The Bamboo Kids are finishing up their as of yet untitled third record. Reaching farther back into their New Jersey roots, you will definitely hear some Springsteen influences on this one - including tons of piano, organs and saxes. The songs are better than ever and even if you're a little afraid of the Boss infections, there's enough punk rock swagger and attitude to fulfill your narrow-minded sensibilities.

Alternative rockers The Walk Ons are finishing up their second full-length recording as this is written. Expect well-crafted hooks, some smokin' guitars and a new almost danceable sound. They've definitely been listening to some new and current things that have influenced their songwriting for the better.

The Electric Shadows new LP/CD is done and will be out on Douchemaster Records this summer. Fantastic sing-along power-pop rock-n-roll in the vein of Rockpile, Flaming Groovies, Big Star, Eddie and the Hot Rods, etc. You get the picture, right? Now get the record!

There is a bit of bad news - Mighty Fine's bass player and nice guy extraordinaire, Paul, broke his neck in a bicycle accident not too long ago. He will be alright. He is in a neck brace until September. Obviously there will be no rocking out for him for a bit. We wish him a very speedy and safe recovery and hope to see Mighty Fine back in action soon. Their new record being mixed as this is written. Hopefully it will be out by summer.

Some great new local bands to check out:

The Ex-Humans
Foster Care
The Back CC's
The Mess Around
Bad Dream
Pocahontas
The Soft Pack (formerly The Muslims)
Blank Dogs
Imaginary Icons
Daddy Long Legs (members of Electric Shadows)
·Minibones
·The Anabolics
State Of Decline



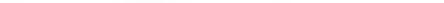
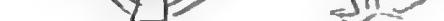
NY SCENE REPORT

NY SCENE REPORT: World War IX were picked up by Zodiac Killer Records, a label that's released records by such crucial acts as The Dwarves, GG Allin, Candy Snatchers, and Electric Frankenstein, so they're in good company. Also, a WWIX animated cartoon should be done in a few months. That'll be cool! The Stags couldn't play their gig on June 6th at Hanks Saloon with Brunch of The Living Dead because their singer Jim was hospitalized, but he's on the mend now. Simona, also of the Stags, has also been using her filmmaking talents to work on music videos for The Dishwashers. Check out her snappy professional website to see one: <http://simonaprives.com>

Bill Florio reports that Lost Locker Combo, the hilarious school-themed group he fronts, are recording a second album (entitled Sophomore Slump.) It'll include some of their recent live favorites such as Homeroom Hot and Don't Eat At The Subway. Bill also plays in The Heart Punchers, a brand new group formed out of the remains of The Shemps, and they've recruited Dave Harrison from The Mesaround on second guitar. The Underthings also have a new CD called Big Hits. It's only \$5 for 8 songs and will be sold at Underthings shows and is available by emailing underthings@verizon.net or through their MySpace account at www.myspace.com/heyheyistheunderthings.

Their next show is at Hank's on June 13th with Another Saturday Night, & after that they'll be opening for Roy Loney and Cyril Jordan of the Flamin' Groovies at Southpaw on July 24th. As many know...some members of the Underthings also happen to perform in a mostly-instrumental band called The Moto-Gators, and they're playing at Spike Hill on Bedford Avenue in Williamsburg on June 25th. Those who dig 1960-ish guitar stuff should really check them out because they play it with a lot of style and flair! Those riotous hardcore Blackout Shoppers have a new album too. It's called 'Pass Out' and they're reportedly very proud of it. They recently obtained a new drummer known as The Beast, who's been drumming for Beer Drinking Fools and who's played guitar in a hardcore band called Last Chance in Arkansas. The Shoppers will play the annual Punk Island festival to be held on Governor's Island on Sunday, June 21. It's the 2nd time around for that big free punk festival, which features several stages and about 70 bands. If the idea of ferry-boating to Governor's Island doesn't appeal to you, keep in mind on July 11th, they'll play another free show in Tompkins Square Park with Star Fucking Hipsters, World War IX, Skum City, Trauma Team 666, and Iconicide. After that, their next gig will be playing some big barbecue show on Sat., July 25 out on Long Island with Urban Waste, The Wretched Ones and others. Stupid Party, a punk band moving in a Kraut-rock direction whose debut LP is almost sold out, are now trying to figure out how to nab a van & bass player for a tour. They hope they will be able to get their favorite Asheville transplant, Cris Hughes to play with them. If so, he's also got a van. They'll be putting out a split with Bad Blood, who's supposed to do the tour with them and if you go to www.myspace.com/stupidparty perhaps you can help them obtain other items they're looking for. Johnny's is buying a motorcycle, Chuck wants one of those all-metal guitars called a Dobro, and Corey wants to buy some Amon Dill records for cheap. Nice Face started out as a one-man project by former Some Action frontman Ian, but now it's evolved into a full-fledged gigging band and I'm looking forward to seeing them. Their LP is coming out this fall on Sacred Bones. They were supposed to play the next big Dot-Dash event opening for 70's Euro-punk legends The Kids, but it seems that gig has either been cancelled or indefinitely postponed. JAPESHIT! have a brand new 7" on Mother Chorizo and will tour the West Coast in June with Litany For The Whale. The Spines, who recently recorded at Boombbox Studio in NJ, and are the first and only autoharp punk band, will play Otto's Shrunken Head Tiki Bar & Lounge for Frank Wood's wind-down Sunday on July 26. In Mykel Board's opinion, Otto's Shrunken Head has been host to a number of annoying reunions of 70s/80s punk bands that seemingly can't play anything except old blues numbers, but they've also hosted a few amazing new bands like the terrific SUPERBUICK from PA, plus all the usual locals like World War IX, Blackout Shoppers, The Spines, Kissy Kamekaze, and Endangered Feces. Mykel has recently returned from his tour of Tennessee with Sid Yiddish where he played in a gay cafe in Nashville, wearing a t-shirt that said "Save a horse, ride a cowboy." That must have gone over well! On the same trip, he shook hands with a Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan... and the regional representative of the American National Socialist Party. Why a Nazi and a Klansman would want to shake the hand of a Radical Punk Rock Bisexual New York Jew, I can't guess. Nevertheless, I must say "EEEE!!!"

* Is it a coincidence "Heart Puncher" is also the title of a song by The Stallions? Hmm. I wonder!



X, with Steve Soto & the Twisted Hearts

Live at the Bowery Ballroom, 5/29/09

I'd never seen X before, but this was a good show to be my first for two reasons:
 a) They're back to their original line-up of DJ Bonebreak, Billy Zoom, Exene, and John Doe.
 b) This is a special tour where the set list was chosen via internet poll by the fans.

In fact, John Doe complained from onstage a little bit about how their fans only chose fast, upbeat songs leaving them with no slow tunes for breather breaks. As it turned out he needn't have worried. More about X in a bit, but first something about the openers. Steve Soto, as you may know, was one of the original members of The Adolescents alongside Rick & Frank Agnew, Casey Royer, and Tony Cadena. If I'm not mistaken Steve and Rick were the only two constant members among a changing line-up. Certainly, they were best known for their first album which Tony sang all the leads on. But Steve Soto did end up taking over some lead-vocal duties later on in their career, such as on the Their Balboa Fun*Zone album. In his new band, Steve now takes over all of the lead vocals. In fact, its Steve's singing voice that's the group's strongest asset. It's confident, pure, clean and charming. He has great instincts about where and how to emotive in order to sell a song. As I listened I kept thinking *he's a great singer*. Sadly, that's about all I thought about them. The band's major drawback is they don't push themselves. They were *too comfortable* on-stage, playing it safe, and very much enjoying themselves. The style of music they play reminds me of The Reigning Sound's brand of classic rock with a punk edge, but you really need to push that sort of stuff hard or else it comes across as mundane. The faster song weren't *totally* boring even if they were far too easygoing, but most of the slow tunes dragged, making them more difficult to appreciate. My concerns mounted when the organ player strapped on an accordion, (is there any instrument more associated with nerdy squareness in rock? Hello? Gary Lewis & the Playboys?) however, these concerns evaporated when he played it in a peppy Zydeco style. Steve mentioned onstage that two of the Twisted Hearts were formerly in Royal Crown, a band I've never heard of. My advice, either get different back-up guys or jab 'em with something sharp and pointy so they aren't so happy to be laid-back. While Soto's band played many slow and mid-tempo tunes, X, in contrast did almost all fast ones. That perked everyone up quite a bit. Bonebreak is quite simply a terrific drummer and nothing's diminished his strength, power and speed at all. Billy Zoom of course, was excellent. His rockabilly-punk guitar style sparkled as much as his shiny silver guitar. I can also gladly report that the years have *improved* Exene and Doe's harmonies. True, the first couple of songs they hit some of those trademark sour bum notes they're notorious for, and if flat harmonizing annoys you, as it does lots of people, it may have contributed in leading you to fail to appreciate X's other unique qualities over the years. Others have accepted their perceived tone-deafness as part of the shtick. My friend Dave is the former drummer of two prior bands I was in, and he was at this show too. When I mentioned to him that "Exene and John have finally learned to harmonize," he replied that X were always *supposed* to be just a little bit off. Well, whether they were supposed to be off or not, this time they weren't, and I liked them all-the-better for it. As soon as they warmed up they were singing on pitch and on key for the whole rest of the evening. YAY! All in all, it was a very enjoyable performance. I was pleased to hear my three favorite X tunes, Nausea, Los Angeles, and We're Desperate. Similarly, the crowd was thrilled to hear all of their favorite numbers. The excitement level was consistently high. Truth be told, I never really followed X throughout their career. There were many songs they played that I have no idea what they were, and quite a few of them I thought were really, really good. I also have to admit that I was very happy they did NOT play their whiney rendition of The Troggs' Wild Thing, which I never really liked. They did do their version of Jerry Lee Lewis's Breathless, which I never liked either, but I concede they did it better live than they did on the record. X does seem to be the sort of act that does better with their own material, although, sadly, these "cover versions" are the records they charted highest with in the 'legitimate' music biz. Who knows why? Anyway, they were brought back for two well-deserved encores. It's nice to know an old late-seventies/early-eighties LA punk band can show up to prove they still have the chops. Will I ever see X again? Who knows? But I'm happy to say I've seen 'em.

LATE NEWS: EXENE WAS DIAGNOSED WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS EARLY JUNE, 2009. V.O. SENDS HER OUR BEST WISHES AND LOVE.



COMIX



LIMP WRIST s/t one-sided mini LP

It seems this band can do no wrong! I completely love this record. To me, Limp Wrist deliver everything you'd EVER wanna hear from an in-your-face Hardcore band. Blistering. Tight. Hard. Rough. And I'm not even trying to be Homoerotic about it, although I guess they are! **To the Grave** is an anti-AIDS tirade that I wholeheartedly agree with. **Bought Out** tackles the injustice of gentrification. **Dead Weight** seems to be a plea for some forgiveness to relieve the guilt of a personal matter. **Collapse** is cryptic. I'm unsure what it means but it could possibly be asking latent queers to face the honest truth about themselves and the "collapse" of their closet. The last three cuts are my favorites. **Spun** is a Straight Edge, anti-narcotic song. **Knuckles** is an anti-violence statement about The nature of frustration, and **S.T.A.** closes out the mini-album with another strong anti-violence message. I also want to discuss the cover art. I love it. The front cover is a collage of a man who peers vacantly through some sleazy gloryhole to see all of the pressures that brought him to this place: Narcotics, Religious-Bigotry, War, Body-Fascism, and The-Insistence-Upon-Maintaining-Youth-&-Beauty. The back-cover is a photo of the band upside-down with their heads in the sand (literally) which is a condition (figuratively) I'm glad to say this band clearly ISN'T in. Write to the label, here: WAITING RECORDS, 101 Jewel St. #2 Brooklyn, NY, 11222. www.waitingrecords.com



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ME AM INSANE?

AT WORK



AT HOME



AT HOME



ON THE STREET



ON THE STREET



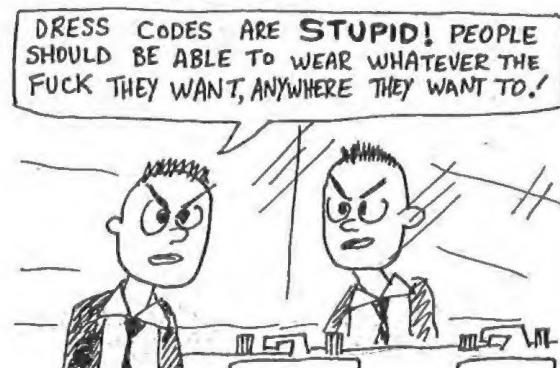
IN THE CLUB



IN THE CLUB



AT WORK



TONY



Edy's, Double Fudge Brownie Ice Cream : Omg, this is the best chocolate brownie ice cream I've ever tasted! Do you know how other chocolate brownie ice creams have chunks of brownie in them that are all hard and chewy? Well the brownie chunks in this stuff are so perfectly blended they melt in your mouth! Amazingly smooth ice cream with a great rich choco-flavor too! It's worth getting!

Feed, Whole Grain Granola "Bittersweet-ness": Aargh! I keep grabbing the bag and pouring it in my mouth. What do they put in this stuff, narcotics? I hate when you get that feeling like you can't put the bag down, and you gotta just pour it right outa the bag into your mouth like an animal or you'll go crazy. It's not like it even tastes that great. I mean it tastes fine, but I swear there is some sort of ingredient in here that is addictive, otherwise I wouldn't be getting this compulsive urge to eat the whole friggin' bag in one sitting.



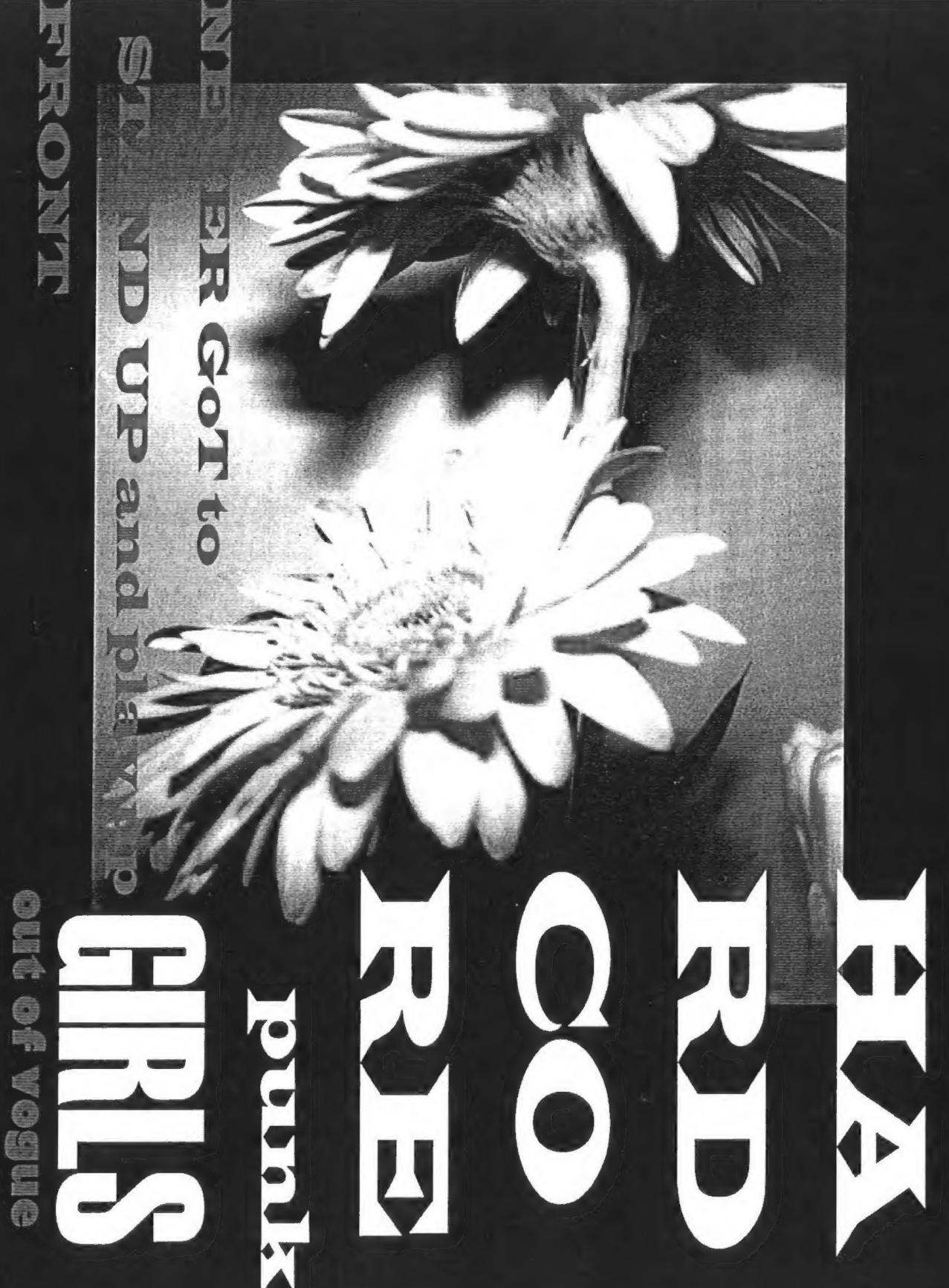
Newman's Own, Creamy Caesar Salad Dressing: Now that Paul Newman is dead, I wanted to buy a bottle of one of his salad dressings as a donation to his charity foundation in his memory, but Ronster beat me to it when he brought this home one day. Frankly, I think the Caesar salad dressing that comes in the little packet for free when you buy Fresh Express Bag of Caesar Salad Blend kits is better tasting. I taste too much egg and oil in Newman's. The spices are okay. The consistency is too thick.



Turkey Hill, Duetto "Soft Serve with Cherry Venice Ice Easy-Scoop Gelati": It's really great how this super-flavorful cherry taste pops right out at ya, but the soft-vanilla balances it out and keeps it from overpowering. I like to take my spoon and mash and stir the Cherry Ice and Vanilla Ice Cream together to make a smoother blend.

Planter's, Cocktail Peanuts, - Unsalted.: The unsalted peanuts are so much better than the salted ones. Keeping the salt off of them lets you enjoy the peanut flavor more, and you don't have to feel like you really ^{need to} chug-a-lug all this water to refresh you from the salt. But why are these unsalted peanuts more money than the salted ones? Since they are adding *one less* ingredient, shouldn't the unsalted ones cost *less* money too?





out of vogue

GIRLS

punk

**RED
HOT
EXTRA**

WE
WERE GOT TO
STAND UP AND PLAY
FRONT